UNDERSTANDING THE PROJECT -

AFRIMERICAN CULTURE INITIATIVE

## REDLINING: SYSTEMIC RACISM IN USA

## History:

In 1938, not the private sectors but the federal government across the United States decided to create color coded zones in all cities based on the safety in investment for future profits or boom. The safest zone for investment had the best infrastructure, resources and planning while the others had relatively higher financial risks with all the old and abandoned buildings. There were four different zones created, graded from A to D. Grade A being the best and grade D being the worse. [Refer to the HOLC maps]

* + Grade A – Green zone
  + Grade B – Blue zone
  + Grade C – Yellow zone
  + Grade D – Red zone

This was not it, the planned placement of some communities within the low graded zones [mostly red] was solely based on color of the skin. This systematic placement of communities belonging to person of color, foreign born and black residents in the red zone is popularly known as redlining. It was executed by changing or implementing policies within the law that affected some communities in the fields of housing, education, safety & security, healthcare and employment. For housing, the ‘non-white’ residents were deprived of home loan in the green zone as per the policies given by the federal government and were compelled by law to reside in the red zone. This was a big change to shape systemic racism on a housing level that segregated the ‘white’ and ‘non-white’. The focus on better services, facilities and infrastructure to the designated better zones created a massive difference between the lifestyle of people.

## Effects in the present:

In Boston, the difference between the life expectancy among two different areas [Back Bay: Green zone & Roxbury: Red zone] that are closer in distance is that of 30 years. The inflation in regular commodity price happening with time does not match with the income of these communities living in the red zone areas thus affecting their quality of life. The cause was due to the seizing of opportunity in development from the past in such zones and systematically placing targeted communities over there.

## Undesigning the redline:

It is an initiative [by Designing the WE: NYC] to draw a potential raise in the standard of living among the red lined areas to promote good quality of life without any discrimination based on skin color. There are places in Boston like Roxbury [Red lined] that have seen a significant rise in housing costs as developers have scooped up developed properties to create luxury housing. Likewise, currently The Brewberry in Jamaica Plain is a hot market for affluent newcomers.

# BASIC DEFINITONS:

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Leaders & decision makers tackle problems by addressing violations while beginning the process of mending relationships. The approach of tackling problems is known as restorative justice. In practice, restorative justice is a response to a harmful incident that seeks the inclusion of all involved, in efforts to meaningfully address the harm and restore trust in relationships.

5 principles according to Susan Sharpe in her book ‘Restorative Justice: A vision for healing and change’ are-

1. Invite full participation and consensus
2. Work towards healing what has been broken
3. Seek direct accountability
4. Reintegrate where there has been division
5. Strengthen the community and individuals to prevent further harm

## INSTITUTIONAL RACISM or SYSTEMIC RACISM

This one is embedded through laws and regulations within the society or an organization, for instance schools, leading to issues like discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, healthcare, education, political power and many other verticals.

Afrimerican One 🡺 Anti-racist systems 🡺 Boston Prep Charter Schools [BPCS]

The BPCS holds a cultural nutrition program to ensure the cultural diversity of the school. Afrimerican Academy is an online African diaspora cultural education platform.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT (CBA)

It is a contract signed by community groups and a real estate developer to provide specific amenities and/or mitigations to the local community or neighborhood. In exchange, the community does not oppose or sometimes even supports the project. Other countries also have such agreements that require some benefits from developers but defer from CBA such that they are a part of development agreement within government. In USA these agreements are usually private, although contractual agreements can be a part of development agreement within government.

# THE PROJECT

## COMMUNITY PARTNER

Afrimerican Culture Initiative [ACI]

1. Non-profit
2. R&D in social injustice
3. Cultural awareness

Boston Prep Charter School [BPCS]

1. ACIs client
2. Community of color

## PROBLEMS

1. Fast food businesses are a threat to student health
2. Lack of cultural importance
3. Lack of proper cultural cooking practice [Authenticity]

## PURPOSE

1. Combat negative health outcomes of fast food
2. Cultural calendar:
   * Learn about diverse cultures
   * To blend in healthy and cultural meals

## MAINTAIN SPREADSHEET

Maintain a spreadsheet in excel keeping tabs on the start and finish date for tasks along with roles and brief explanation. For instance:

1. Cultural Calendar: Focusing on food recipes & events/holidays
2. Survey [if any]
3. Meal demo: Look at what meals of the day are served for that cultural day
4. Community presentation
5. CBA document
6. Web-app schematic

# POTENTIAL TASKS [FOOD]

1. Team structure: Primary roles
2. Project schedule in a spreadsheet [look at the previous heading]
3. Brainstorm about the definition of our project
4. Secondary roles –
   * Research on cultural events –
5. Enrollment data
6. Additional research on some important events
7. Interact with people of different cultures
8. Events familiar to students
9. Events not familiar to students but culturally important
   * Research on cultural recipes –
10. Nutritional guidelines from dieticians
11. Know the limited resources available to schools in terms of ingredients
12. Interact with people of different cultures involved with cooking
13. Additional research on varied cultural recipes
14. Organize all the collected data and brainstorm with the school chef
15. Start with the preparation of cultural calendar
16. Focus on:
    * Cooking style
    * Meal variations
    * Recipe with instructions
17. Select a few culturally aware/involved students from the school for demo tasting
18. Launch demo tasting 1
19. Review feedback and incorporate changes
20. Discussion with the chef for improving the recipe as per feedback
21. Launch demo tasting 2: Learn the scope of improvement after the feedback

# POTENTIAL TASKS [WEB-APP] \_CONTENT CREATION

1. Layout: A schematic of the web-app structure
   * Understand the different level of users
   * Sort content after developing it, like:
2. About restorative practices
3. Vision in a more holistic approach [+ve]
4. Team & Stakeholders
5. Videos such as –
   * Awareness of cultural imp
   * About different cultures
   * Healthy food habits
6. A spotlight area to show upcoming events
7. Online meeting scheduling
8. Stakeholder maintenance
   * Functionality & user-friendly interface
   * Aesthetics & Visuals
9. Integrating data analysis for some crucial areas to study patterns and improvise on it later.
10. Start-up and maintenance cost analysis: Try to find sponsors and get partial funding for the initial investment.
11. Development, execution and database integration of the Web-App

# CBA DOCUMENT

1. Create a roadmap in an interactive format to make any person understand the process easily, start to end.
2. Be precise with content [put some informative pictorial denotations].
3. Distribute contents from index to everyone so that the process of filtering becomes efficient.

# OTHER IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

1. Project charter
2. SWOT analysis